(a) whether it is a fact that large number of educational, literary and cultural delegations made officials foreign visits from March, 1998 to December, 2001;

(b) if so, the number of delegations who made foreign visits in connection with separate subjects; and

(c) when and which countries were visited by the delegations and the number of Government employees and private citizens, who accompanied the delegations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Deletion of passages from history books

1420. SHRINILOTPALBASU:
SHRIRUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that NCERT has recently deleted certain passages from the history text-books for schools;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the NCERT chief had publicly stated that from now onwards, the content of history text-books would also be determined by the fact as to whether they had religious sensitivities of different communities; and

(d) the name of experts who have been engaged by die NCERT to conduct this exercise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. As per information received from NCERT class-wise and book-wise details as also pages containing such portions in the identified history text-books are as under:

Book 1 (Ancident India)—Class VI—Romila Thapar, Reprint 2001, pages 40-41.

Book 2 (Modem India) — Class VII—Arjun Dev and Indira Arjun Dev, Reprint 2001, page 21.

Book 3 (Ancient India) — Class XI—Ram Sharan Sharma, Reprint 2001, pages 7, 20-21, 45, 90—92, 137-138, 240-241.

Book 4 (Medieval India) — Class XI —Satish Chandra, Reprint 2001, pages 237-238.

(c) and (d) NCERT is developing new text-books based on the new Syllabus. Due care is being taken by them to ensure that these books do not contain any material/reference which is likely to hurt the sentiments of any particular community or religious minority. There is no fixed panel of experts for writing the text- books. When the text-books are finally printed, the names of the experts associated with the development of text-books are mentioned in them.

Survey of continental shelf

1421. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of OCEAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether India would be first Asian country to conduct a survey of its continental shelf;

(b) if so, whether the project is being funded by the Department of Ocean Development;

(c) whether any Memorandum of Understanding has been signed by the National Centre for Antarctic and Ocean Research and the National Institute for Geophysical Research, Hyderabad;

(d) if so, what is the total cost to be involved in this project; and

(e) by when this project is likely to be completed?

THEM1NISTER OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLIMANOHAR JOSHI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Several countries are initiating marine surveys for preparation of their claims on continental shelf. India is among a few Asian countries to conduct marine geophysical survey for delineation of outer limits of its continental shelf. The project is funded by Department of Ocean Development and implemented by National Centre for Antarctic and Ocean Research, Goa on behalf of the Department.

(c) Yes, Sir. In this regard a Memorandum of Understanding has been singed by National Centre for Antarctic and Ocean Research, Goa with National Geophysical Research Institute, Hyderabad in relation to acquisition of data during the survey, data interpretation, documentation and manpower.